

Central Strategic Careers Leadership

Developing approaches to the strategic
leadership of careers across trusts

p3**Welcome****p4****CEC Trust Community of Improvement****p5****The role of Central Strategic Careers Leader (CSCL)**

- Meet a Central Strategic Careers Leader

p9**Embedding sustainable and strategic leadership of careers across your trust**

- Careers Impact internal leadership review
- Future Skills Questionnaire
- Compass+
- Careers Leader training offer

p13**Understanding the five conditions for success for embedding sustainable and strategic leadership of careers:**

- Leaders' vision and ambition for careers
- Strategic careers planning
- Distributed leadership of careers
- Development of planned, progressive and responsive careers learning journeys underpinned by learning outcomes
- Impact Evaluation

Introduction



Nicola Hall

The Careers & Enterprise Company is the national body for careers education in England, supporting schools and colleges to deliver modern, 21st century careers education.

Our mission is to help every young person find their best next step.

The Careers & Enterprise Company aims for a careers system that has a measurable impact on young people now and in the future.

Our Trust Community of Improvement and the Central Strategic Careers Leaders that we work with are pivotal to this mission.

By working with us you can learn alongside other brilliant Academy Trusts and tap into the work our Careers Hubs and employers are doing to spread best practice in the regions your schools operate in.

Academy Trusts are in a unique position, with a hugely influential role, and we have seen first-hand the change that can be made when a trust puts sustainable and strategic leadership of careers and preparing young people for the world of work at the heart of their mission.

The role of Central Strategic Careers Leader is such an exciting and pivotal role, and we are delighted to be working with you as we support and challenge each other to further develop central strategic careers leadership in trusts.

The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) Trust Community of Improvement (Col)

The Careers & Enterprise Company's Trust Community of Improvement is a national network that empowers Central Strategic Careers Leaders (CSCLs) and trust executive teams to position both central strategic careers leadership and academy level careers leadership as core drivers of school and trust improvement.

Through expert-led CPD, tailored resources, and strategic support, the Trust Community of Improvement helps trusts:

- Embed careers within solutions to education leadership challenges.
- Align provision with national policy priorities and trust-wide goals.
- Apply robust, tested methodologies for strategic planning and impact evaluation, including the Careers Impact System, Gatsby Benchmarks, modern work experience models, and learner career readiness tools.

Membership provides access to comprehensive data dashboards, leadership development, and collaborative models that enable continuous improvement aligned to trust priorities, strengthen accountability, and improve learner outcomes.

Expectations for Trust engagement

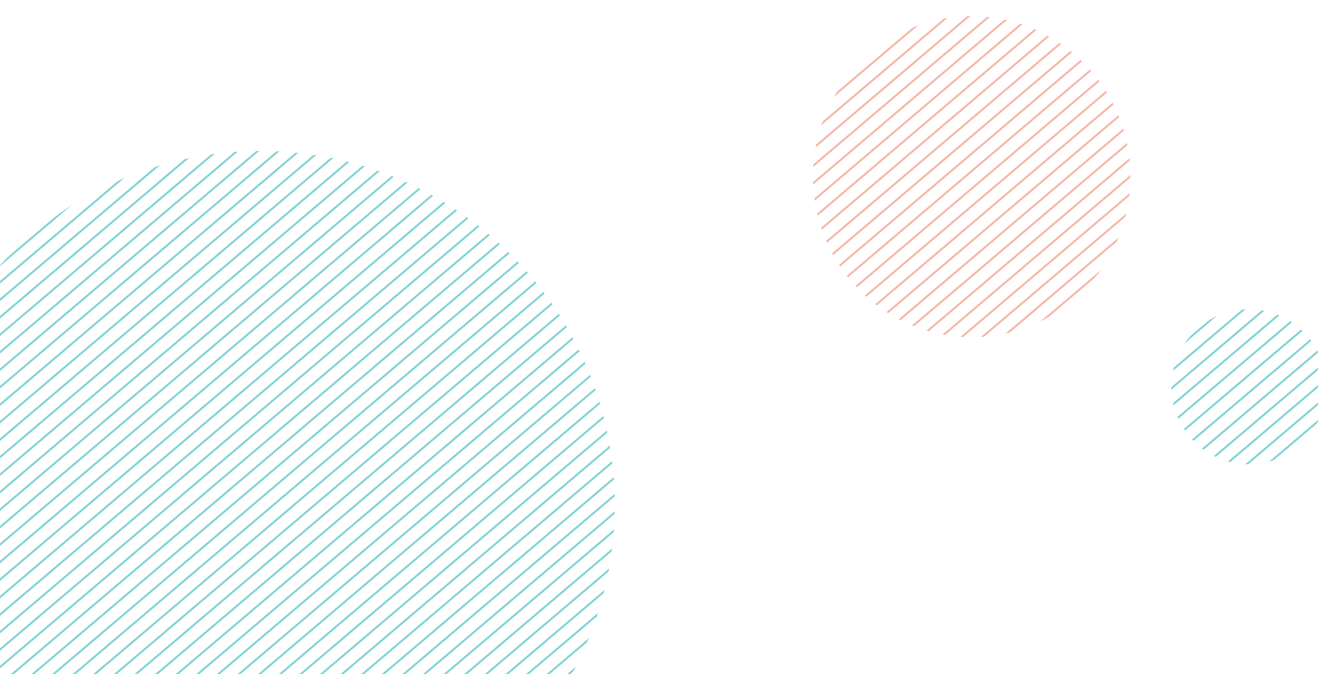
To deliver greater impact and position careers leadership as a solution to trust-level education leadership challenges, there are two formal engagement options:

Engage

- A formal agreement from the trust to participate in the Careers & Enterprise Company's Trust Community of Improvement.
- Completion of an onboarding form to confirm the Central Strategic Careers Leader (CSCL) and identify any additional representatives who will engage with the Trust Community of Improvement.

Commit

- A formal agreement from the trust to fully commit to the Trust Community of Improvement.
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which unlocks exclusive benefits, including free access to the Trust-Level Data Dashboard and priority strategic support.



Benefits of Membership

- **Welcome and onboarding support**

A virtual introduction to the Trust Community of Improvement, ensuring clarity on purpose, expectations, and available resources.

- **Two virtual trust Community of Improvement meetings annually**

Engage in two high-impact virtual sessions each year designed to connect you with other member trusts. These meetings provide structured opportunities to share best practice, explore innovative solutions, and collaborate on trust-wide approaches to continuous improvement. Topics include strategic tools such as Careers Impact internal leadership reviews, Future Skills Questionnaire, and modern work experience models ensuring your trust stays aligned with national priorities and sector-leading practice.

- **Careers Impact internal leadership review (Trust level)** Gain access to and expert support for implementing the Careers Impact Trust-Level Internal Leadership Review and Maturity Model. This robust, evidence-based framework enables trusts to evaluate the effectiveness of central careers leadership, identify strengths and gaps, and embed careers as a measurable driver of continuous improvement aligned with trust priorities.

- **Training and resources for Careers Impact peer-to-peer reviews**

Receive comprehensive tools and expert guidance to facilitate high-quality peer-to-peer reviews across your trust. These reviews use a standardised methodology to promote shared learning, strengthen leadership practice, and accelerate improvement through collaborative evaluation.

- **Access to the Careers & Enterprise Digital Academy**

Unlock a dedicated online hub offering curated resources, guidance, and professional development. The Digital Academy provides on-demand learning and practical tools to support CSCLs and trust leaders in delivering impactful careers strategies.

- **Peer networking and good practice sharing**

Benefit from structured opportunities to connect with other trusts, exchange strategies, and share proven solutions. The Trust Community of Improvement fosters collaboration and efficiency, enabling trusts to learn from sector-leading practice and accelerate improvement.

- **Support to engage with Careers Hubs**

Receive tailored guidance to maximize the value of the national Careers Hub network, ensuring your trust leverages regional expertise, employer connections, and collaborative opportunities to strengthen careers provision.

- **Regular communications and development opportunities**

Stay informed with timely updates, insights, and invitations to CPD sessions designed for Trust Executive Teams, CSCLs, and Careers Leaders. These communications keep your trust aligned with policy changes, sector trends, and emerging best practice.



To find out more and engage with the Trust Community of Improvement, contact us at trusts@careersandenterprise.co.uk or visit the webpage

What committed members of the Trust Community of Improvement (Signed MoU) gain:

Trusts that formalise their commitment by returning a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) unlock additional strategic benefits:

- **Trust-level data dashboard**
Access a comprehensive, insight-rich dashboard designed to evidence the impact of careers provision across your trust. This tool provides clear, actionable data on:
 - » Gatsby Benchmark performance across all academies.
 - » Outcomes from Careers Impact internal leadership reviews.
 - » Future Skills Questionnaire results, measuring learner career readiness.
 - » Learner destinations data and progression trends.

With these insights, CSCLs, SLTs and executive teams can make evidence-based decisions, identify strengths and gaps, and drive strategic, trust-wide improvement aligned to priorities and learner outcomes.

- **Tailored CPD on data dashboard and strategic insight**

Access expert-led professional development designed to transform data into strategic action. This training equips Central Strategic Careers Leaders and data managers, etc. with the skills to interpret trust-level data dashboard insights, identify trends, and make evidence-based decisions that drive efficient and measurable improvement.

By focusing on data-driven leadership, this CPD ensures careers provision is positioned as a core lever for trust priorities enabling continuous improvement and stronger learner outcomes across all academies.

- **Careers Impact trust-to-trust review**

Participate in a professionally facilitated review process built on a standardised, rigorously tested methodology designed to deliver actionable insights. These reviews focus on the strategy and impact of sustainable, strategic central careers leadership across your trust, ensuring alignment with trust priorities and continuous improvement goals.

Through this process, trusts gain:

- » Expert-led facilitation to guide meaningful dialogue and evidence-based evaluation.
- » High-leverage actions that strengthen careers leadership as a driver of trust-wide improvement.

- » A clear roadmap for embedding careers within solutions to education leadership challenges, ultimately improving learner outcomes.

- **Annual in-person development events**

Strategic, high-value sessions designed for Central Strategic Careers Leaders and Trust Executive Teams. These events provide focused leadership development and networking opportunities, enabling participants to:

- » Explore how careers leadership can address key education leadership challenges.
- » Gain insight into sector best practice and emerging policy priorities.
- » Access practical tools and frameworks to strengthen trust-wide careers strategies.
- » These events are positioned to help trusts stay informed, connected, and equipped to maximise the impact of careers leadership within improvement plans.

- **Embedded Compass+ Programme CPD (Train the Trainer)**

Empower your trust with a specialist CPD programme that upskills one nominated colleague each year in the effective use of key Compass+ features, including the Future Skills Questionnaire, Internal Leadership Review, custom groups and activities, and data intelligence. This approach enables trusts to cascade training efficiently, ensuring all academy Careers Leaders achieve consistent quality and effective use of Compass+ as part of continuous improvement. Sessions run three times annually, offering flexibility for booking and planning.

- **Compass+ CPD for Careers Leaders (Direct delivery to Careers Leaders)**

Empower your Careers Leaders with specialist virtual training designed to enhance their use of Compass+. Our sessions provide practical strategies and insights to embed Compass+ effectively across your trust. Please note: These are fixed workshops delivered virtually and cannot be tailored for individual trusts. Availability is subject to capacity, so early commitment is recommended.

Training offer includes:

- » Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ): 5 Steps for Success
- » Careers Internal Leadership Review
- » Compass+ Data and Reporting
- » Fully Embedding Compass+

Note: Our Embedded Compass+ Programme CPD (Train the Trainer) offer enables trusts to build internal delivery capacity and should be considered as the first option when planning CPD.

Benefit	Engaged Member	Committed Member (Signed MoU)
Welcome & Onboarding	✓ Tailored introduction and onboarding support	✓ Tailored introduction and onboarding support
Trust Community of Improvement virtual meetings	✓ Two annual virtual sessions focused on best practice sharing and trust-wide improvement	✓ Two annual virtual sessions focused on best practice sharing and trust-wide improvement
Digital Academy access	✓ Dedicated hub for resources, guidance, and professional development	✓ Dedicated hub for resources, guidance, and professional development
Peer Networking & Good Practice Sharing	✓ Structured opportunities to connect and collaborate with other trusts	✓ Enhanced networking through peer review and CPD delivery opportunities
Careers Hub Engagement Support	✓ Guidance to maximize value from the national Careers Hub network	✓ Guidance to maximize value from the national Careers Hub network
Regular Communications & Development Opportunities	✓ Updates, insights, and invitations to CPD sessions	✓ Updates, insights, and invitations to CPD sessions
Trust-Level Data Dashboard	✗ Not included	✓ Comprehensive dashboard with insights on Gatsby Benchmarks, Careers Impact reviews, Future Skills Questionnaire, and learner destinations
Tailored CPD on Data & Strategic Insight	✗ Not included	✓ Expert-led training to interpret dashboard data and drive trust-wide improvement
Careers Impact Internal Leadership Review (Trust Level)	✗ Not included	✓ Access and support to implement the Careers Impact review and Maturity Model
Peer-to-Peer Review Training and Resource Offer	✗ Not included	✓ Tools and guidance for high-quality Careers Impact peer-to-peer reviews
Annual In-Person Development Events	✗ Not included	✓ Strategic leadership development and networking for CSCLs and executive teams
Embedded Compass+ Programme CPD (Train the Trainer)	✗ Not included	✓ Enables trusts to build internal delivery capacity and embed Compass+ effectively
Compass+ CPD for Careers Leaders (Direct delivery to Careers Leaders)	✗ Not included	✓ Specialist virtual and in person training sessions to upskill Careers Leaders in using Compass+ (subject to capacity)

Find out more about joining CEC Trust Community of Improvement here: [Trust Community of Improvement](#)

Central Strategic Careers Leader (CSCL) role

The CSCL is a critical strategic leader within the trust, responsible for positioning careers as a lever for improvement and a solution to leadership challenges. This role goes beyond compliance it drives system-wide impact, aligning careers provision with the trust's vision, priorities, and improvement plans.

Why this matters to trust improvement:

- **Improves outcomes:** Careers provision under CSCL leadership directly supports learner achievement, progression, and readiness for life beyond school, key indicators for trust success.
- **Strengthens governance:** Embeds careers as a standing item in executive and board-level discussions, ensuring accountability and strategic oversight.
- **Drives consistency and quality:** Creates a coherent, trust-wide approach to embedding sustainable and strategic careers leadership, reducing variability and ensuring every academy meets high standards.
- **Data-driven decision making:** Uses aggregated data (Compass+, FSQ, destinations, RONI) to inform trust-level strategy, evaluate impact, and target interventions for vulnerable learners.
- **Builds capacity:** Develops leadership capability across academies through CPD and structured support.
- **Clarity of impact:** Demonstrates measurable impact through careers, clarifying how the trust prepares learners for their next steps and futures.
- **Leverages partnerships:** Engages Careers Hubs and business networks to bring external expertise and opportunities into the trust strategy.



Strategic impact:

The CSCL role transforms careers provision into a strategic asset, ensuring it is embedded in governance, improvement planning, and leadership conversations. This influence enables the trust to deliver on its vision, meet statutory requirements, and achieve sustainable improvement while equipping learners for their best next steps and futures.

We have developed the Careers Impact Maturity Model (Trusts) to help trusts understand the pivotal role of the Central Strategic Careers Leader (CSCL) and embed consistency and system-wide impact. This model aligns careers provision with the trust's vision, priorities, and improvement plans, and is available exclusively to member trusts of the CEC Trust Community of Improvement. It complements the Careers Impact Internal Leadership Review for schools and provides a structured framework for continuous improvement.

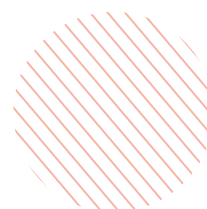
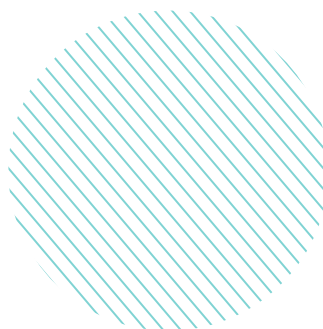
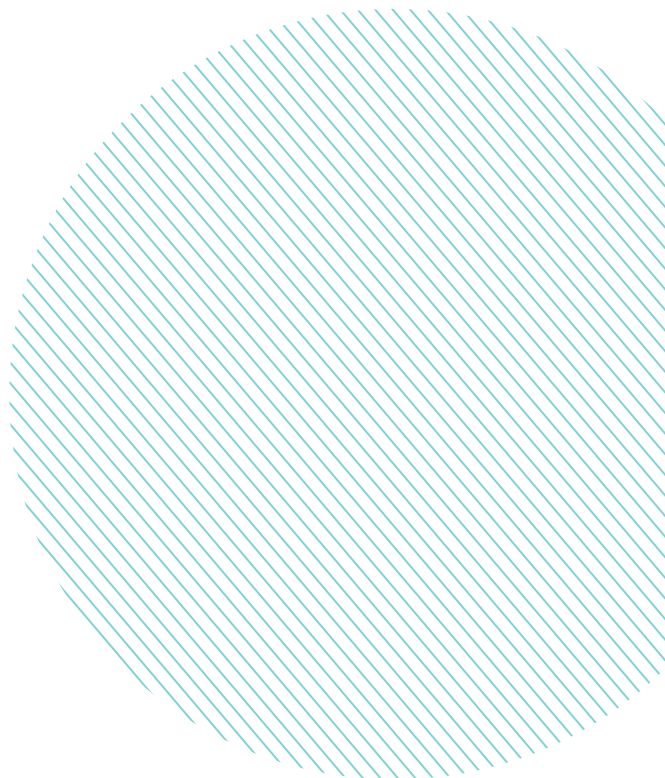
Key Themes:

- Careers Leadership, Vision & Strategic Planning (Benchmark 1)
- Meeting the Needs of All Learners & Impact Evaluation (Benchmarks 1 & 3)
- Labour Market Information & Future Pathways (Benchmarks 2 & 7)
- Curriculum Integration (Benchmark 4)
- Employer Encounters & Workplace Experiences (Benchmarks 5 & 6)
- Personal Guidance (Benchmark 8)

Strategic Opportunity for CEC Trust Community of Improvement member trusts:

Member trusts can access an expertly facilitated Careers Impact trust-to-trust review based on this model, enabling focused, high-leverage action steps aligned to trust improvement priorities. This collaborative approach ensures careers provision is not only compliant but becomes a strategic driver of improvement across all academies and at trust level.

Find out more about [joining CEC Trust Community of Improvement here](#).



Embedding sustainable and strategic leadership of careers across your trust

Resource, support & tools to support Central Strategic Careers Leaders to embed sustainable and strategic careers leadership across trusts:

Careers Impact internal leadership review

Value & Purpose:

An internal leadership review is based on the Careers Impact Maturity Model, which provides a shared language of how careers can be positioned as a driver for school, special school, and college improvement. Undertaking an internal leadership review supports the quality assurance of careers provision and encourages continuous improvement aligned to whole institution's priorities.

Within annual evaluation processes, undertaking a Careers Impact internal leadership review will:

- **Engage Leaders** through informed and impactful SLT and governor engagement in and vision for sustainable and strategic careers leadership.
- **Align priorities** through intentional distributed leadership of careers as a driver for whole institution improvement.
- **Embed best practice** through improved understanding of best practice in careers leadership and of meaningful and sustained achievement of the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- **Celebrate Success** through recognitions of strengths in and impact of careers leadership and provision.
- **Sustain quality and impact** through internal quality assurance and impact evaluation of careers leadership and provision.

Encourage academy level teams to get started with an internal leadership review on Compass/Compass+ today.

CEC have created a Careers Impact Maturity Model for Central Strategic Careers Leaders in Multi Academy Trusts. To access this resource contact us at trusts@careersandenterprise.co.uk

Getting Started:

Find out more [here](#).



Getting Started:

To find out more visit:
[Careers Impact internal leadership review](#)

Future Skills Questionnaire

Value & Purpose:

Careers Leaders can use learners' responses to the Future Skills Questionnaire to:

- » Identify gaps in a school's provision.
- » Tailor careers activities to individual needs.
- » Measure progress of their careers programme over time.

The Future Skills Questionnaire supports Careers Leaders to evaluate their careers programme by gathering data on learners' careers knowledge and skills. This should sit within a wider programme evaluation also looking at feedback, education engagement and destinations data.

Key Details:

The Future Skills Questionnaire is a tool embedded into our free digital product Compass+, it allows Careers Leaders to effectively measure learners' career-readiness.

Simple data insight can support Careers Leaders to make targeted interventions, evaluate their careers programme and identify the impact of careers education in their setting.



Getting Started:
Find out more [here](#).



Compass+

Value & Purpose:

Your Careers Leaders can use the features of Compass+ to support the strategic leadership of their progressive careers programmes:

Meet the individual needs of all learners: use data, and FSQ to track careers learning journeys and target (personalised) support appropriately.

Evaluate, analyse and plan: interpret performance data (careers impact, Compass evaluation, FSQ) to report on and plan for continuous improvement.

Futureproof your careers provision: create an 'Institutional memory' by promoting a whole institutional approach to careers guidance.

Secure & scalable: stay GDPR compliant through MIS integration with increased capacity as usage grows.

Centralise Careers Partners: build a strong database of all partners who can support & enhance provision.

Quality Assure careers: use Compass+ as a repository to demonstrate impact & learner outcomes to internal and external stakeholders.



Getting Started:
Find out more [here](#).

Key Details:

Use Compass+ to manage, track, evaluate and report on your institution's careers provision at individual learner level.

It is available to most secondary schools, special schools, sixth forms and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in England.

Careers Leader training offer

Value & Purpose:

Our training courses provide a huge opportunity for your Careers Leaders to accelerate your trust schools towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Over 4,000 Careers Leaders have completed the training and are using it to improve and develop their careers programmes. Whether your Careers Leaders are experienced or new to the role, there's a training course to help them inspire young people to find their next best step.

Key Details:

- Training designed for Careers Leaders across all settings
- Fully funded
- Flexible learning options
- Bursary awards on completion
- Accredited courses up to Level 7



Getting Started:
Find out more [here](#).

Understanding the five conditions for success for embedding sustainable and strategic leadership of careers

To support Central Strategic Careers Leaders in embedding a sustainable and strategic approach to careers leadership across the trust, we have identified five conditions for success:

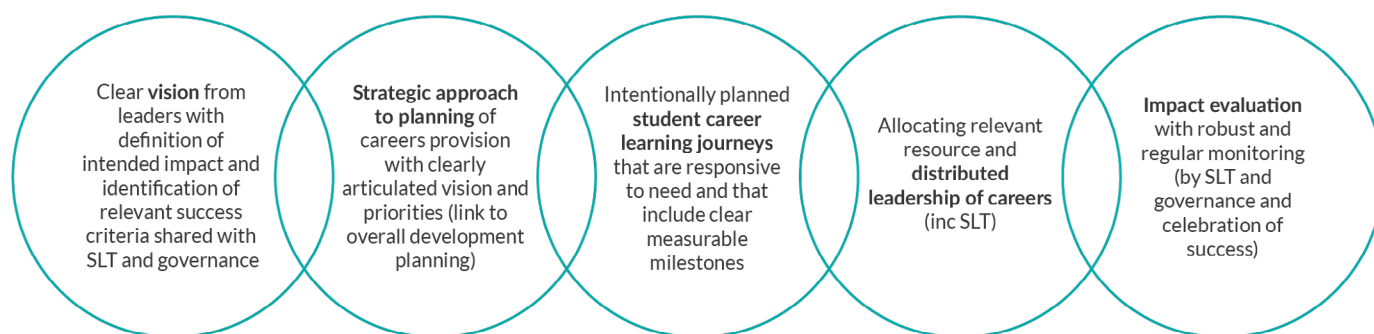
- » Vision, ambition, and intent for careers
- » Strategic approach to planning
- » Development of progressive careers learning journeys
- » Leadership and distributed leadership of careers
- » Impact evaluation

“It is incredibly important that we put good careers education at the forefront of our group’s vision and strategy. We want our pupils to leave school with high aspirations and make informed decisions on their next choice of destinations.

Embedding careers education in the culture of the school from the outset and providing a coherent careers journey, will allow our pupils to take responsibility for their personal development and make the most of all opportunities presented to them.

With dedicated central support, and a greater focus on CEIAG, we aim to provide schools with additional capacity to build on the excellent work that they are doing at a local level and provide a world-class careers education to all pupils across our schools.”

Dame Sally Coates, United Learnings' Director of Secondary Education



Getting Started:

Find out more here:
[How To Guides](#)

Vision, ambition, and intent for careers

Good practice is characterised by a clear vision from leaders with definition of intended impact and identification of relevant success criteria shared with Senior Leadership Team and governance.

Having an overall vision statement is commonplace in trusts. In almost all cases it is specifically linked to careers, with clear mentions of preparing learners for their futures, using vocabulary such as excellence, potential, skills, and aspirations.

The vision is used to drive improvement, guide decision makers and act as a moral compass.

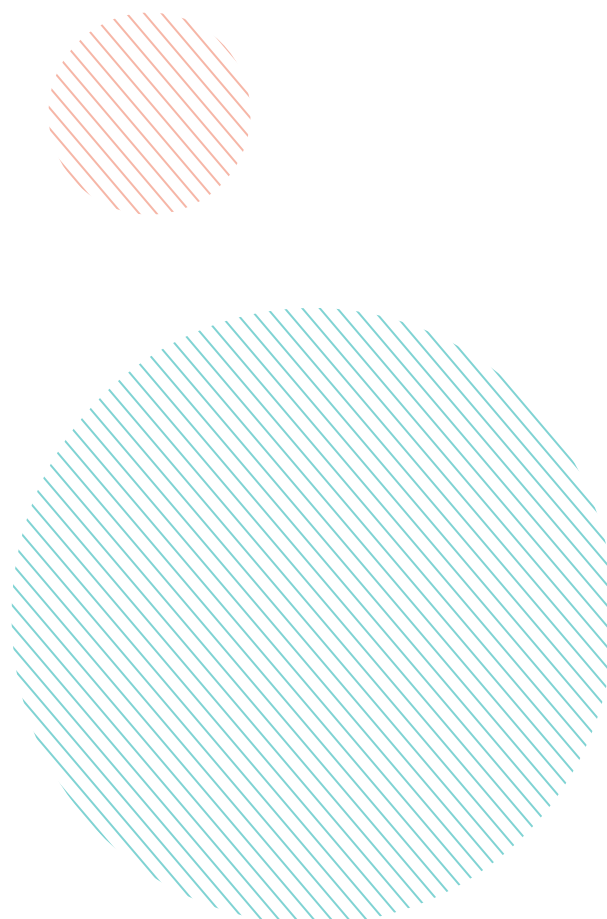
A focus on not just what is being taught and learned, but ‘why this?’ and ‘why now?’ has real relevance to the vision for careers education for ‘learners as leavers’ of your trust.

Best practice examples:

- Leaders’ vision for careers states the current and future objectives, aligned to the whole institution’s overarching vision.
- This vision is widely shared and understood by all stakeholders (senior leadership, governors, staff, learners, parents, and carers).
- Leaders justify and explain their intent for careers, responding to the contextual needs of students and setting high aspirations within and beyond their institution and is threaded throughout strategic development planning (school and trust level).
- Leaders prioritise the goals and aspirations of learners, challenging stereotypes and championing all routes into education and employment with equity.
- Leaders invest in careers related CPD and support for all staff, so that all feel confident in their role in realising the ambition for careers.
- A clear structure for governance supports the vision and strategic priorities for careers through regular scheduled reporting on progress and impact evaluation.

Central Strategic Leadership of Careers - Key questions for reflection:

- How clear is the trust’s vision for preparing learners for their future?
- Do all academies have a careers vision that aligns with the trust-wide vision? If not, where are the gaps?
- Is the language around “preparing learners for their future” used consistently across academies?
- How can we ensure the aligned vision is tailored to meet diverse learner needs?
- How do we balance consistency with flexibility for individual academy contexts?
- What evidence shows the shared vision is leading to high-quality, future-focused careers provision?



Example Trust vision:

In the next five years, we aim to have a structured approach to business engagement and careers for both primary and secondary pupils across the group. Every pupil will develop broad horizons and high aspirations for their post school destinations and careers, and schools will consider destination outcomes to be as important as exam results. Schools will form deep and sustained links with local businesses, to drive high-quality, purposeful, and motivating employer engagement experiences.

To support this vision, our key recommendations are:

Over the next three to five years, all schools should:

- Identify a Careers Leader, with protected time to carry out the role who is either a member of, or line managed by, the senior leadership team.
- Deliver a careers education programme that promotes high aspirations and helps pupils understand what they ensure that their local governing body is holding the school to account for careers provision against KPIs and is supporting the school to develop links with local business leaders.
- Ensure that all teaching staff consider careers and destinations a shared responsibility.
- Develop deep and sustained links with a few employers, ideally spread across a range of industries and offering insights into a range of job roles.

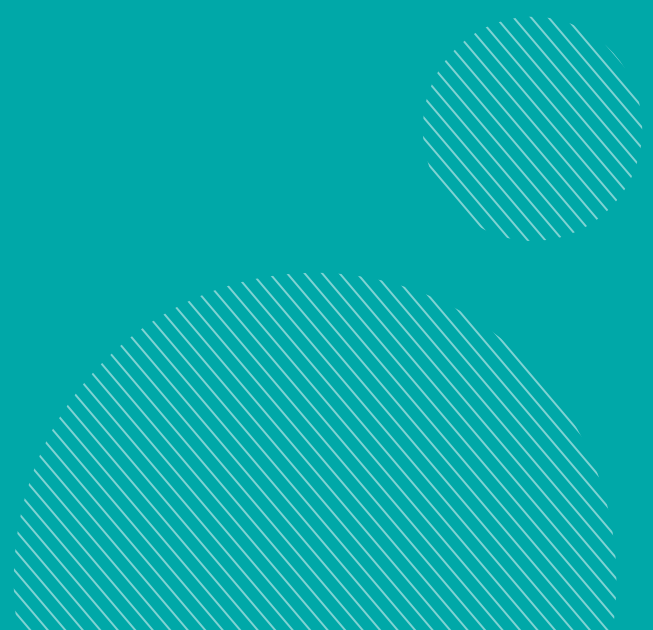
Secondary schools should:

- Ensure all pupils have a personal plan that helps them to take responsibility for their future.
- Ensure that all staff have access to relevant information, including labour market information and the grades each pupil needs to progress to their preferred destination.
- Lead at least one visit to a university as well as the opportunity to learn about apprenticeships and technical education options for all pupils as early as possible in KS3, with further university visits in Y12.
- Ensure that all pupils take part in multiple, meaningful experiences of workplaces or voluntary/community work at least once in KS4 or KS5.

- Use Compass+ annually to measure the school's provision against Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Establish and make use of alumni networks, both to support pupils in their next steps and to support delivery of aspects of the school's careers programme.

To support schools, the trust will should:

- Appoint a central strategic careers leader, responsible for the overall strategy and for accelerating schools' progress by setting high standards; establishing a strong network; sharing resources, opportunities, and practice; and working with external partners.
- Promote collaboration within clusters and across phases and sectors, including supporting schools to arrange joint events where possible, extending opportunities to more pupils.
- Develop a Careers Education Framework, mapping out the provision and opportunities that pupils should receive at each key stage (KS1-KS5) and including the essential elements of an excellent careers education.
- Develop a careers education curriculum, setting out the knowledge and skills that will be taught explicitly at each key stage.
- Provide schools with guidance on high quality business engagement.
- Continue to support 11-18 schools to develop and sustain excellent and viable sixth forms with strong cohort numbers and a course offer that will enable pupils to succeed.



Strategic approach to planning

Good practice includes a strategic approach to planning of careers provision with clearly articulated vision and priorities (linked to overall development planning).

A strategic plan gives an institution a roadmap for the future; a set of shared ideals and end goals against which to align day-to-day work. A strong strategic careers plan affects every department and all levels of stakeholders, whether a senior leader, governor, or part of the wider school team, so by taking this approach to developing strategic plans for careers, you are enabling progress towards sustainable, strategic, and embedded careers programmes across your trust.

As a Central Strategic Careers Leader, you should have a trust-wide strategic plan for careers provision. Your schools can then be supported to develop their own strategic plans based on trust and school key priorities with flexibility to respond to local economic priorities.

Best practice examples:

- Input and collaboration from a range of stakeholders.
- Deliberately structured pathway towards achieving leaders' vision, ambition, and intent for careers.
- Builds on the institution's current state, informed by a range of data and information.
- Sets clear strategic objectives/goals which are student-centred and measurable.
- Underpinned by an action plan detailing timeframes, responsibilities, and evaluation plans.

Central Strategic Leadership of Careers - Key questions for reflection:

Is there a strategic careers development plan in each school within your trust that includes:

- » Priorities for the continuous improvement of careers provision.
- » Careers roles and responsibilities.
- » Priorities for the development of careers provision aligned to school or special school vision and development priorities.

Is careers also featured in whole school or special school development plan in each school within your trust?

Strategic planning - Key questions for reflection:

- Is there a clear trust-wide strategic careers plan with priorities, roles, and responsibilities?
- How well is this plan embedded in wider trust strategy and resourcing?
- Do academy-level plans align with the trust-wide plan while meeting local learner needs?
- What processes monitor, review, and update plans at trust and academy level?
- How do we measure the impact of strategic careers planning on learner outcomes?



Student careers learning journeys

All learners are on a 'careers learning journey' towards decisions at key transitions and lifelong career development, and all schools put in place a provision of careers education and guidance to support learners on that journey.

Careers learning journeys should be planned to include what learners need to know, understand and be able to do and in what order.

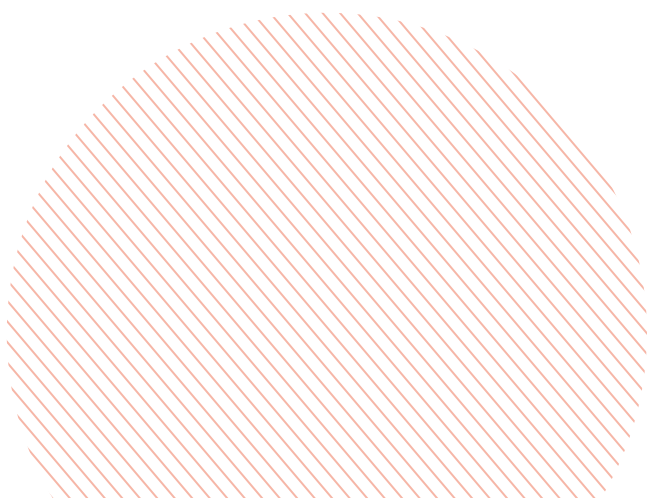
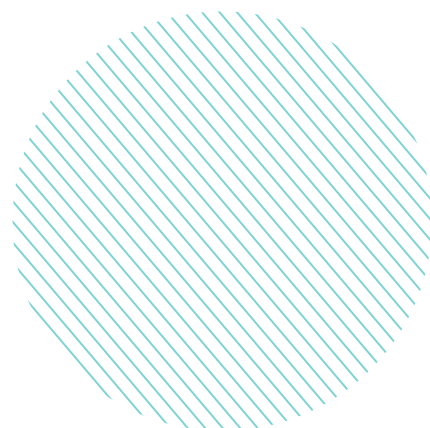
Good practice enables intentionally planned student career learning journeys that are responsive to need and that include clear measurable milestones.

Good practice examples:

- Serve as an illustration implementation of leaders' vision, ambition, and intent for careers.
- Informed by diagnosis of actual need, underpinned by ambitious and measurable careers related learning outcomes.
- Progressive and differentiated – building explicit knowledge, skills, and behaviours.
- Support each and every student to make aspirational and informed decisions, make effective transitions and be "careers ready".
- Intentionally address the needs of all learners through carefully curated careers learning, encounters with employers and providers, experiences of the workplace and personal guidance aligned to clear learning outcomes.

Central Strategic Leadership of Careers - Key questions for reflection:

- Do all academies have documented careers learning journeys that staff, learners, and stakeholders understand?
- Is there a consistent approach to careers learning journeys that includes universal, responsive, and personalised outcomes?
- How well are these journeys integrated into wider trust strategies like curriculum and quality assurance?
- How clearly do these journeys outline progressive steps for informed decisions and effective transitions?
- What processes keep learning journeys relevant to changing needs and labour market trends?
- How regularly are they evaluated for impact at academy and trust level?
- What evidence shows these journeys improve learner outcomes and readiness?
- How do we use evaluation findings to improve our approach to student career learning journeys?
- How do we ensure consistency across academies while allowing flexibility for local context and personalised needs?



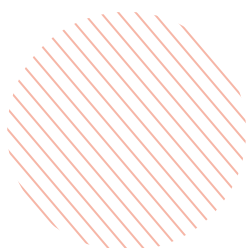
Good practice includes allocating relevant and sufficient resource to ensure a distributed leadership of careers with genuine Senior Leadership Team commitment.

Good practice examples:

- Completion of funded Careers Leader Training for staff new to role and more experienced colleagues.
- Careers Leader is considered a local expert.
- Careers Leader is fully integrated into wider institution improvement discussions.
- Explicit identification of careers leadership roles and responsibilities across a range of colleagues (senior and middle leaders).

Central Strategic Leadership of Careers - Key questions for reflection:

- Is there a clear careers leadership structure in every academy?
- What systems support ongoing CPD for Careers Leaders and key stakeholders?
- How is impact of staff CPD measured?
- Is careers leadership embedded in trust-wide strategic priorities?
- How well is careers leadership integrated into wider trust systems and decisions?
- What mechanisms enable distributed leadership of careers at academy and trust level?
- How is collaboration between academy Careers Leaders and trust leadership maintained?



Impact Evaluation

Good practice includes intentional impact evaluation strategies with robust and regular monitoring (by Senior Leadership Teams and governance) and celebration of success. Effective impact evaluation in careers education is instrumental in ensuring any career learning.

journey effectively meets leaders' vision, ambition, and intent for careers.

Good practice examples:

- Scheduled impact evaluation milestones, incorporating wider institution quality assurance and impact evaluation metrics alongside career specific data and information.
- Clarity on roles and responsibilities for contributing to the impact evaluation process, with clear mechanisms for sharing insights and seeking support/challenge.
- Robust examples of how and where impact evaluation had informed, adapted, refined previous practice and how this had led to improved provision.

Central Strategic Leadership of Careers - Key questions for reflection:

Destinations Data

- Do we systematically collect and analyse both intended and actual destinations data across all academies?
- How consistently do we apply success criteria (e.g., NEET figures, breadth and aspiration of destinations, labour market alignment)?
- How do we use destinations data to inform trust-wide decisions and continuous improvement?

Learner Perception

- Do we systematically collect and analyse learner perceptions of career readiness?
- How do we use this insight to improve planning and provision across the trust?

Stakeholder Voice

- Do we consistently gather and act on feedback from parents, employers, governors, and staff?
- What mechanisms ensure stakeholder input leads to tangible improvements?

Quality Assurance

- Are careers provision and compliance reviewed through robust QA processes?
- How do we evaluate effectiveness using both qualitative and quantitative data?
- How do we ensure QA insights drive continuous improvement and strategic planning?



The background is a solid teal color. Scattered across the page are several circles of varying sizes. Each circle is filled with thin, white, parallel diagonal lines that run from the top-left to the bottom-right.

**THE CAREERS &
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